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PSCI 334.R01: International Security

Karen Ruth Adams

University of Montana, Missoula, karen.adams@umontana.edu

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International Security

Course Description and Learning Objectives

In this course, we will explore the meaning, sources, and future of human, national, international, and global security. We will consider a range of historical and contemporary threats, assess the vulnerability of individuals, social groups, and states to each threat, and evaluate individual, social, national, and international strategies for reducing threats and vulnerabilities.

The course has four parts. In Part I (Concepts and Priorities), we will define security in terms of survival and prosperity and prioritize subjects of security (individuals, social groups, states, ecosystems, etc.).

In Part II (Using the Threat, Vulnerability, and Assistance Framework), we will discuss the fundamental causal claims of security studies.

In Part III (Theories and Tests), we will explore realist, liberal, and critical explanations about the sources of threat, vulnerability, and assistance and test them with recent and historical data. We will consider a range of violent and non-violent threats to individual and state survival (interstate war, civil war, terrorism, crime, natural disaster, human accident, disease, and deprivation).

In Part IV (Forecasts, Strategies, and Policies), we will discuss the roles of analysts, policy makers, and practitioners in making forecasts and developing and implementing policies to improve security. We will also consider ways that states, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, journalists, scholars, and citizens do and could enhance human, national, international, and global security.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Define and explain human, national, international, and global security and insecurity with reference to the concepts of threat, vulnerability, and assistance.
- Evaluate how scholars and other analysts prioritize human, national, international, and global security and how reliably they explain the sources of threats, vulnerabilities, and assistance, forecast future risks, and prescribe policies for improving security levels.
- Measure and compare the historical and contemporary security levels of various actors, make informed forecasts about their future security challenges, and offer prescriptions for them and those who wish to help them meet those challenges.

In the course, you will develop your critical reading skills by evaluating other scholars' theories, arguments, and evidence. You will improve your analysis and writing skills by comparing and contrasting theories and arguments and by developing and supporting your own arguments about the sources of threat, vulnerability, and assistance, and the security challenges of the coming decades.

Prerequisites

To enroll in this course, you must have at least junior standing, and you must have taken PSCI 230X (Introduction to International Relations).

Course Communications

Throughout the course, I will communicate with you by email and by posting announcements and materials on Moodle, which you can access [here](#).

I will also email you from time to time. To ensure that you receive my emails, please check your UM email account on a regular basis or have your UM email forwarded to an account you check often.

Required Reading

To do well in this class, you must complete two types of assigned reading before each class:

1. The readings related to each lecture (see course schedule). There are about 80 pages per week. These readings will be posted on Moodle.
2. News articles and opinion pieces related to human, national, international, and global security in the daily *New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>. To complete this assignment, you will need to read more than the 20 free articles per month allowed on the site. Thus you should either sign up for a 3-month student subscription, which is a few dollars a month, or read the daily NYT for free by logging in on the Mansfield Library website.

Other Ways to Keep Up with Current Events

Whenever possible I encourage you to consult these and other additional sources:

- National daily newspapers such as the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Wall Street Journal*, as well as international papers such as the *London Times*, *Guardian*, and *Le Monde*, international news services such as Reuters, and compilations of international news such as <http://worldpress.org/>
- Weekly news magazines such as *The Economist*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *US News and World Report*.
- Monthly and quarterly journals such as *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *The National Interest*, and *International Security*.
- National Public Radio programs such as “Morning Edition,” BBC World Service,” and “All Things Considered” on KUFM 89.1 (for schedule, go to <https://www.mtpr.org/>).
- Nightly and weekly television news programs. On PBS, these include “PBS NewsHour,” “BBC World News,” “Amanpour,” and “Frontline,” which you can watch on your television KUFM Channel 11 (<http://www.montanapbs.org/>) or stream on your computer from their websites. The ABC, CBS, and NBC evening news, as well as ABC’s “Nightline,” can also be helpful.

Please note that these news sources will not substitute for the *New York Times*. Because it offers the broadest range and greatest depth of international news and opinion, current event discussions and questions on quizzes and exams will be based on the *New York Times*.

Course Requirements and Study Tips

You are expected to attend class regularly, participate actively in discussions, and complete all of the assigned reading, including the previous day’s *New York Times*, before each class. To encourage you to do so, 15% of your grade will be based on attendance, participation in class discussions, and occasional current events and reading quizzes.

The remainder of your grade will be based on four assignments, which include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The assignments will test your understanding of and ability to analyze material from the readings, lectures, discussions, and *New York Times*. Be prepared to recall and apply what you have learned and to write clear, thoughtful, and well-supported answers to challenging questions.

In class, you should take notes on the lectures and discussions. After class, take a few minutes to write down your overall impressions of the session and the questions and insights it raised for you. These notes will provide you with leads to follow in reviewing for and writing the assignments.

For additional study tips, see “Reading Questions” and “Essay Grading” below.

Assignments and Grading

The assignments and their weight in your overall grade are as follows:

<i>Assignment #</i>	<i>DUE date, time, & location</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
1	Daily, in class and occasionally in groups	Attendance, active and informed participation in class discussion, group discussion, reading and current events quizzes, and other assignments	15%
2	Thurs 9/23 by 12 noon, on Moodle	Preliminary Security Assessment – multiple choice, short answers, and essay question (800-1,200 words; this is about 3-5 pages double-spaced in 12 pt font)	20%
3	Tues 10/19 by 12 noon, on Moodle	Using the Threat, Vulnerability, and Assistance Framework (TVAF) – multiple choice, short answers, and essay question (1,000-1,500 words)	25%
4	Weds 12/15 by 5:20 pm on Moodle	What Kind of Theorist Am I? – multiple choice, short answers, and essay question (1,000-2,000 words)	30%
5	Weds 12/15 by 5:20 pm on Moodle	Final Security Assessment – multiple choice and short answers	10%
		TOTAL	100%

The plus/minus grading system will be used. Grades may be curved, but the following distribution is the lowest I will use (*i.e.*, if you earn 93% of all possible points you are assured of an A in the course):

93-100	A	83-86	B	73-76	C	63-66	D
90-92	A-	80-82	B-	70-72	C-	60-62	D-
87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	0-59	F

Academic Honesty

Students must practice academic honesty and should be familiar with [UM's Student Conduct Code](#).

Students who engage in academic misconduct such as plagiarism (representing another person's work as their own) will receive a 0 for the assignment in question and may be subject to a disciplinary sanction by the university.

Zoom link and video

The Zoom link is posted on Moodle. Please note that class will be recorded. Occasionally I will post a class video on the Moodle website to help students review the material. Do not post or share class videos. Thank you.

Disabilities

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity. If you think you may have a disability that adversely affects your academic performance, please contact the [Office for Disability Equity](#). Once you provide me with a letter from them, I will work with you and the ODE to provide a reasonable modification. "Reasonable" means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. Students with disabilities should apprise me of their needs as soon as possible, well before the due date of an assignment on which they wish to be accommodated.

Make-Up Policy

In general, I excuse absences and accept late papers only from students directly involved in serious, documented emergencies. This year, I will also consider requests from students whose lives are strongly affected by the coronavirus. If you find yourself in the midst of an emergency or strongly affected by

Covid-19, please notify me as soon as possible (in advance of the seminar or due-date if possible) that you will be unable to attend class or submit work on time. To do so, send me an email explaining the circumstances of your emergency or other situation, and provide me with your phone number and relevant documentation. Please note that I may deny make up requests, and I may assign makeup work that differs from the regular assignment. If you fail to submit work for any other reason you will receive a 0 for the class session or assignment. That may put you at risk of failing the course.

Drop Policy, Grading Options, and Incompletes

The 15th day of the semester is the last day to drop the class or change the grading option without my signature on an override form. If you wish to drop or change the grading option after that, you must provide documentation of an emergency or other serious situation in which you are directly involved that has made it impossible for you to complete the course. For UM's policy on incompletes, see UM's [Academic Policies and Procedures](#).

PSCI 400

Political Science majors may use this course to complete PSCI 400 (the upper-division writing requirement in the major). The requirements for doing so are as follows:

1. You must have finished your Intermediate writing requirement (Gen Ed approved Intermediate writing course).
2. Send me an email asking to be added to my section of PSCI 400. Please include your 790 number. It is best to do this before the add deadline (15th day of semester).
3. You will revise and expand either your essay from Assignment #2 or your essay from Assignment #3 into a more comprehensive essay with 500-1,000 additional words. The revised essay will answer the same question and must be improved by editing the paper according to my feedback and expanding it to refer to concepts, theories, readings, data, and current events through the end of the class. In discussing theories, consider 1) what theoretical perspective are you arguing from and explain how you can tell this and 2) which theorists would disagree with your argument, and what logic and facts would you use to persuade them?
4. The revised essay is due during finals week. Email your revised essay to me by the deadline; see below for due date and time.
5. Your grade in PSCI 400 and your final essay grade for the assignment you revise will be the average of your grades for the two essays. (*Students not in PSCI 400 who wish to increase their grade on the essay for Assignment #2 or Assignment #3 may do so by following the instructions in Item 3 and 4.*)
6. If time permits, PSCI 400 and other students who revise an essay may present their revised essay in class for extra credit points. Please let me know if you are interested.

Graduate Students

Graduate students must enroll in a 500-level section of the course. Requirements for graduate credit are:

1. Readings: you are responsible for the required UG readings plus your choice of 2-3 recommended readings per week (posted on Moodle).
2. Individual Meetings: See me at least once a month during my office hours or by appointment for in-depth discussion of the readings. It is up to you to keep on this schedule.
3. For Assignments 2-5, write short answers and essays that are about 1.5 to 2 times the length required of undergraduates, and refer to both required and recommended reading.
4. Optional professional paper (enroll in additional 1 credit course): Propose, write, rewrite, and present a 15-18 page research paper. For example, you could compare the historical security levels and strategies of three actors, with forecasts and policy prescriptions. See me for more examples, detailed instructions, and due dates.

Reading Questions

In assignments and quizzes, you will be asked to compare and contrast the arguments of various scholars and schools of thought. Doing so requires critical reading skills. To develop and practice these skills, consider the following questions for each item you read:

A. Overview

1. What is the central question or problem addressed by the author? In particular, what is their argument about security/insecurity and other course concepts?
2. What is their answer or argument?

B. Evaluation of the Argument

3. What is the logic of this answer or argument? What school of thought, if any, does it represent?
4. Do you understand the author's argument? Do you agree with it? Why or why not?

C. Evaluation of the Evidence

5. What evidence does the author use to support their argument?
6. Does the evidence support the argument? Are you aware of other evidence that would support or weaken the argument?

D. Significance

7. Which of the authors we have read would agree and disagree with this argument, and why?
8. How does this article fit into the themes and arguments developed in class?

Essay Grading

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 100 | Superb. Develops an extremely well-written, clear, and convincing argument that answers the question and substantiates the answer with facts and other information from readings. |
| 90-99 | Excellent. Develops a generally well-written, clear, and convincing argument that answers the question and refers well to readings. Omissions or inaccuracies are few and detract little from the overall quality of the argument. |
| 80-89 | Good. The argument is generally good and answers the question, but the answer is disorganized, unclear, inaccurate, or unsupported in several important respects -- OR -- The argument is well-written, clear, and convincing but doesn't fully answer the question or has few and/or insubstantial references to readings. |
| 70-79 | Marginal. The answer has numerous shortcomings in organization, clarity, accuracy, or support -- OR -- The argument is fairly well-written, more or less clear, and somewhat convincingly but doesn't really answer the question AND has few and/or insubstantial references to readings. |
| 60-69 | Unacceptable. The answer is very vague, completely wrong, has nothing to do with the question, and/or provides no evidence of reading. |

Course Outline and Schedule

All readings are available to print or download from the Moodle website. If a link is not working, please send me an email. Once you have accessed a reading, print and/or download it so you can highlight and make notes on the text. At the end of the semester, you will lose access to course readings unless you download them to your computer. Doing so on a daily basis will enable you to build a library you can consult later.

PART I: CONCEPTS AND PRIORITIES

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Written Assignments</i>
8/31, 9/2, 9/7	A. Introductions & Course Overview B. Defining and Explaining Security Reading: Wolfers, Annan	Begin ASSIGNMENT 1: Participation
9/9, 9/14	C. The TVAF and Actual and Perceived Risks Reading: Schneier, Greenhill D. Whose Security Do You Care About? (Prioritizing Subjects of Security) 1. Human Survival and Security <i>See Moodle for readings</i>	
9/16, 9/21	2. State Survival and Security 3. Ecosystem Survival and Security	
9/23	E. Security Workshop	Submit ASSIGNMENT 2: Preliminary Security Assessment by 12 noon on Thurs 9/23

PART II: USING THE TVAF TO ASSESS RISKS AND SECURITY

9/28, 9/30	A. Threats	
10/5, 10/7	B. Vulnerabilities	
10/12	C. External Assistance	
10/14	D. Security Assessments, Forecasts, and Strategies	
10/19, 10/21	E. Security Workshop	Submit ASSIGNMENT 3: Using the TVAF by 12 noon Thurs 10/19

PART III: THEORIES AND TESTS

10/26, 10/28	A. Theories 1. Realist Theories – classical, structural, technological	
11/2, 11/4	2. Idealist Theories -- liberal (economic, political, and neoliberal) and critical (Marxist, constructivist)	
11/9, 11/16	B. Tests 1. Historical Trends in Violent Threats	
11/18, 11/23	2. Historical Trends in Non-Violent Threats	
11/30, 12/2	3. Historical Threat and Security Summary	Assignments #4 & 5 will be posted

PART IV: FORECASTS, STRATEGIES, AND POLICIES

12/7, 12/9	A. What Does It Take to Achieve Common Goods? B. Strategies and Commitments (Security Workshop)	
12/15 (finals week)		Submit ASSIGNMENT 4: What Kind of Theorist Am I? by 5:20 pm on Weds 12/15 Submit ASSIGNMENT 5: Final Security Assessment by 5:20 pm on Weds 12/15 <i>PSCI 400 students:</i> Submit revised paper by 11:59 pm on Fri 12/17